

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 and 7 are presently active in this case, Claims 4-6 and 8 having been canceled by way of the present Amendment.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claims 1-2, 5, and 7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '102 Rehfeld patent (U.S. Patent No. 5,773,102) in view of the '615 Rehfeld patent (U.S. Patent No. 5,478,615). Claims 1-3 and 5-7 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '102 Rehfeld patent in view of Garnier et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,074,732). Claims 4 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the '102 Rehfeld patent in view of the '615 Rehfeld patent and further in view of Friedman et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,908,704). For the reasons discussed below, the Applicants request the withdrawal of the obviousness rejections.

Claims 1 and 7 of the present application recite an intermediate layer having a thickness that is equal to at least $d_{ref} J_{ref}/J_c$, where J_c is a critical energy value specific to a material of the intermediate layer and representative of an energy necessary for propagation of a crack initiated in the intermediate layer; J_{ref} is a reference critical energy value which corresponds to a critical energy value of a polyvinyl butyral (PVB) film and is equal to 35,100 J/m² for a temperature of 20°C and for a drawing rate of 100 mm/min applied to the PVB film; and d_{ref} is a reference thickness which corresponds to that of the PVB film and is equal to 0.38 mm.

The Applicants submit that the cited references, either taken singularly or in combination, do not disclose all of the limitations recited in Claims 1 and 7 of the present application. For example, none of the cited references disclose an intermediate layer having a

"thickness" that is dependent upon a critical energy value specific to a material of the intermediate layer and representative of an energy necessary for propagation of a crack initiated in the intermediate layer.

The '102 Rehfeld patent is cited for the teaching of a laminated glass pane with an intermediate acoustic film made of acoustic resin and PVB. The Official Action indicates that the '102 Rehfeld patent describes critical values corresponding to PVB. The Applicants note, however, that the "critical values" described in the '102 Rehfeld patent are critical frequencies that ^{are used} are used to set the acoustical performance of the laminate. The '102 Rehfeld patent does not disclose or even suggest an intermediate layer having a thickness that is dependent upon *a critical energy value* specific to a material of the intermediate layer and *representative of an energy necessary for propagation of a crack initiated in the intermediate layer*.

The '615 Rehfeld patent is cited for the teaching of a laminated glazing with a plastic interlayer. The Applicants note that the '615 Rehfeld patent does not disclose or even suggest an intermediate layer having a thickness that is dependent upon a critical energy value specific to a material of the intermediate layer and representative of an energy necessary for propagation of a crack initiated in the intermediate layer. Accordingly, the '615 Rehfeld patent does not supplement the deficiencies in the '102 Rehfeld patent noted above.

The Garnier et al. reference is cited for a teaching of a laminated window. The Garnier et al. reference does not disclose or even suggest an intermediate layer having a thickness that is dependent upon a critical energy value specific to a material of the intermediate layer and representative of an energy necessary for propagation of a crack initiated in the intermediate layer. Accordingly, the Garnier et al. reference does not supplement the deficiencies in the '102 Rehfeld patent noted above.

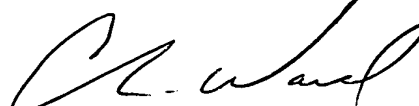
Accordingly, the Applicants submit that the cited references do not render Claims 1 and 7 of the present application obvious. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request a withdrawal of the obviousness rejections of Claims 1 and 7.

Claims 2 and 3 are considered allowable for the reasons advanced for Claim 1 from which they depend. These claims are further considered allowable as they recite other features of the invention that are neither disclosed, taught, nor suggested by the applied references when those features are considered within the context of Claim 1.

Consequently, in view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable reconsideration of this application is therefore requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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